



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The propagation of plague.

Dr. B. Sorrentino, formerly physician to the lazaretto of the island of Nisida, where the cases of plague were treated during the epidemic of that disease at Naples, two years ago, has recently published an interesting communication on plague in which the following conclusions are set forth regarding the propagation of bubonic plague:

Plague is an infection capable of prevailing as an epidemic and as an epizootic. As an epizootic, it occurs among rats and rarely among mice. Not all species of rats are equally susceptible under natural conditions. Some species are receptive in the laboratory only. Many animals are exceptionally attacked by the infection under special conditions not yet understood, though the attack never takes an epizootic form. In the case of monkeys, however, the disease may exceptionally take an epizootic form, although these animals are not ordinarily susceptible.

Plague, according to the view of some authorities, is not properly a human disease, but a zoonic disease transmissible to man by rats. The recent discovery of a chronic form of plague among rats may explain the long passage of time between outbreaks of plague, in which periods no cases of the malady are observed among men and no deaths from it among rats.

In its bubonic form plague is not ordinarily contagious, but in its grave septicæmic and pneumonic forms it is highly so. Widespread plague is rarely propagated from man to man. In outbreaks of pneumonic plague the disease has a tendency to remain localized in the place and among the people first visited by the malady, except in cases where new foci are initiated by moving infected persons. The propagation of plague in the immediate neighborhood is due to the emigration of rats, the Bombay epidemic being a typical example.

The importation of the disease into distant localities from the original focus proceeds in an irregular manner. The importation may be by means of men, rats, or of fomites, especially merchandise, like grain, which especially attracts rats. No limit of distance can be invoked as a claim of natural immunity of any region. When human cases are introduced in a given locality, a certain time, ordinarily a month, passes before indigenous cases appear. In the interval the infection passes to rats, becomes epizootic among them, and then returns to man. The first cases are few in number among men in this instance and succeed each other without apparent relation to one another. If the virus is imported directly by rats there is first observed a mortality among these animals, and after a time, which is shorter than in the cases where the disease is introduced by man, many simultaneous cases occur among the human inhabitants.

The intervention of rodents is not enough to explain all the epidemic phenomena observed. There is necessity for an intermediate agent. This is found in the ectodermic parasites of man and rats, namely, fleas, bedbugs, lice, mosquitoes, etc., but especially fleas. It has been demonstrated that fleas sucking the blood of plague-infected persons carry the germs of the disease in their bodies even for eight days, and then may deposit the bacilli by puncture in other animals.

There are many species of fleas, of which each has a special host, but some of the fleas are capable of passing from one animal to another, or from an animal to man, and vice versa.

The intervention of rats and fleas, Doctor Sorrentino concludes, accounts for nearly all the epidemic phenomena of plague, phenomena which can not be otherwise explained.

MEXICO.

Reports from Monterey—Mortality.

Passed Assistant Surgeon Goldberger reports, September 1, as follows:

The health conditions in Monterey and vicinity continue to be satisfactory as evidenced by a continuation of the low mortality.

During the week ended August 27, 1904, the total number of deaths recorded was 44. The list of mortality presents nothing of special interest.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Ferguson reports, September 2, through Passed Assistant Surgeon Goldberger, as follows:

During the week ended August 27 nothing of importance, from a sanitary standpoint, has occurred between this city and C. P. Diaz.

Report from Monclova and vicinity.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Ferguson reports, August 27, through Passed Assistant Surgeon Goldberger, as follows:

Nothing of a suspicious character has developed between this city and the city of Monclova for the week ended August 20, 1904.

Report from Progreso and Merida—Inspection of vessels—Yellow fever at Merida.

Acting Assistant Surgeon Harrison reports, September 2, as follows: Two weeks ended August 27, 1904: Estimated population, 8,000; deaths from all causes, 24. General condition, only fair. Merida still presenting record of yellow fever in lazaretto, but the general sanitary conditions there seem good.

My report of August 5 should have stated "Progreso" (not Merida, as printed in Public Health Reports of August 19) "should be considered infected from case reported July, etc."

Bills of health have been issued to the following-named vessels:

Date.	Vessel.	Destination.	Crew.	Passengers.	Transit.
Aug. 13	Tjömö	New York	18	.....	.....
13	Esperanza	do	96	50	33
14	Falco	U. S., via Cuba .....	.....	.....	.....
17	Gertrude A. Bartlett	Mobile	7	.....	.....
19	Galveston	Galveston	22	.....	1
19	Susie B. Dantzler	Ship Island	7	.....	.....
20	Mira	New Orleans	35	.....	.....
20	Vigilancia	New York	79	61	32
21	Alm	Mobile	23	4	.....
24	Telefon	Pensacola	24	.....	1
25	Daggy	New York	17	.....	.....
27	Havana	do	96	57	47

Sanitary conditions at Merida—Yellow-fever cases in lazaretto.

In obedience to Department instructions of July 12, I have made one visit to Merida to examine the sanitary conditions there, and will